

The Vine at Home
Pentecost Sunday – Year B

Call to worship

Come Holy Spirit, Come Holy Spirit, Come Holy Spirit.
Come amongst us as we pray, as we sing, as we listen and reflect.

Come amongst us we pray, in some mysterious way, Amen.¹

Hymn: STF 440 Amazing Grace

Opening Prayers

God of all grace, we bring ourselves in worship,
Opening ourselves up to the way the Spirit is at work amongst us.

We pray for justice, we pray for courage.

We listen to your word to us, and listen for The Word within us.

We take courage from this moment, from this encounter, to meet with you – O God.
To be inspired by each other, and by stories from others who seek to follow you.

We know we have not always got it right this day, this week, this year.
We know we have failed you, and we carry the guilt of that.

In this moment, we say sorry for all the times we have fallen short. Unburdening ourselves in the stillness. *[Pause]*.

And, on this Pentecost Sunday, we hear you saying to us: “your sins are forgiven”. Our connection with the divine is not broken or damaged, but renewed again this day.

And for that we rejoice. We bring these, and all our prayers in Jesus’ name, Amen.²

Let us now say the Lord’s prayer

Readings: Acts 2:1-21 The Coming of the Holy Spirit

2 When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. **2** And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. **3** Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. **4** All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

5 Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. **6** And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. **7** Amazed and astonished, they asked, “Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? **8** And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? **9** Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, **10** Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, **11** Cretans and

¹ Call to Worship written by Tim Baker

² Opening prayers written by Tim Baker

Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God’s deeds of power.”¹² All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, “What does this mean?”¹³ But others sneered and said, “They are filled with new wine.”

Peter Addresses the Crowd

¹⁴ But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them, “Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. ¹⁵ Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o’clock in the morning. ¹⁶ No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

¹⁷ ‘In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. ¹⁸ Even upon my slaves, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy. ¹⁹ And I will show portents in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and smoky mist.

²⁰ The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the coming of the Lord’s great and glorious day. ²¹ Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.’³

Ezekiel 37:1-14 – The Valley of Dry Bones

37 The hand of the Lord came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. **2** He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. **3** He said to me, “Mortal, can these bones live?” I answered, “O Lord God, you know.” **4** Then he said to me, “Prophesy to these bones, and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. **5** Thus says the Lord God to these bones: I will cause breath^[a] to enter you, and you shall live. **6** I will lay sinews on you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath^[b] in you, and you shall live; and you shall know that I am the Lord.”

7 So I prophesied as I had been commanded; and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. **8** I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them; but there was no breath in them. **9** Then he said to me, “Prophesy to the breath, prophesy, mortal, and say to the breath:^[c] Thus says the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath,^[d] and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.” **10** I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

11 Then he said to me, “Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, ‘Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.’ **12** Therefore prophesy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord God: I am going to open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. **13** And you shall know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people. **14** I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken and will act, says the Lord.”⁴

John 15:26-27; 16:4b-15

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²⁶ “When the Advocate^[a] comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father, he will testify on my behalf. ²⁷ You also are to testify because you have been with me from the beginning.

4 But I have said these things to you so that when their hour comes you may remember that I told you about them.

The Work of the Spirit

“I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you. **5** But now I am going to him who sent me; yet none of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’ **6** But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your hearts. **7** Nevertheless I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Advocate^[a] will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. **8** And when he comes, he will prove the world wrong about^[b] sin and righteousness and judgment: **9** about sin, because they do not believe in me; **10** about righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will see me no longer; **11** about judgment, because the ruler of this world has been condemned.

12 “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. **13** When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. **14** He will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you. **15** All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.⁵

Reflections on the readings [*You can read a full version of this reflection from Ramona Samuel as part of The Vine resources. Contact thevine@twelvebaskets.org.uk to find out how your circuit can subscribe.*]

I am sure that we all have different ideas as to what happened on the day of Pentecost, apart from what we read in scripture. Let’s face it, the event is one that is most curious. Have you ever wondered why the coming of the spirit was accompanied by the sound of a mighty wind? Why it resulted in people speaking in tongues not previously known to them, or why the people reacted in fear and confusion. The answer might not be as far-fetched as we might think, for after all, we know and believe that God is powerful, and we see throughout scriptures that the presence of God often elicited awe and amazement. We have the examples of Moses and the burning bush, Isaiah in the temple, and Paul on the road to Damascus, just to name a few. So, it should be no surprise that the appearance of the Holy Spirit causes those reactions and responses. But perhaps the most important question should be what the Spirit is for...

... perhaps this time might be a good occasion for us to look more deeply into the Spirit’s work and ask God to work in us the power that can only be found in the Holy Spirit, for us to live lives that are full of the wonder and amazement of God.

You are terrified, confused, and you have no idea what is happening...

The story of Pentecost is unfolding around you. This is a great moment in the New Testament, and gives birth to the church we are still a part of today.

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What are you being called to?

How would you describe the Holy Spirit? What does it mean to you today?

How do you feel about or talk about the Holy Spirit?

Let's spend a few moments in reflection/conversation about this. Lots of theories circulate about the Spirit and her role in the world today (even the use of the pronoun 'her' in that sentence will no doubt raise some conversation!).

Using all that we have reflected on today as we have worked through Ramona's reflection, what strikes you? How might you talk about the Holy Spirit?

Perhaps find someone to share your thoughts and questions with.

Prayers of intercession

God of all grace, we pray for your Church today, especially for the witness of your people in [...this community..], breathe new life into us, and grant us a clear vision to be faithful.

Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

God of all grace, we pray for those who suffer today, all who suffer for their faith...

All who suffer in body, mind and spirit...

Reveal yourself to all in need with comfort and peace.

Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

God of all grace, we pray for the nations in your world. Grant to those in authority the gifts needed to speak clearly across divides, to bring healing and calm, where there are wounds and discord.

Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

God of all grace, In quietness we offer to you the people and places on our hearts today.

[Silence]

Lord, in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

In faith, and hope, we offer these prayers to you Holy God. we may see your work, vision, and kingdom come here on Earth. This we pray in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.⁶

Hymn: STF 409 Let us build a house

Blessing

⁶ Prayers of intercession written by David Lees

May the fire of the Spirit be in your hearts, may the hope of transformation be in your minds,
May the grace of God be in your bodies, may you be a Pentecost people, in Jesus' name,
Amen.⁷

⁷ Additional prayers by Tim Baker